



CURRENTS

JANUARY 2021

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - OXNARD, CA

**Arise, shine, for your Light has come; and the glory of the
Lord has risen upon you.**

Isaiah 60:1



THE EPIPHANY CROSS

Gary W. Henricksen
Parish Administrator

Many of us know that the Magi or Wise Men came to worship Jesus sometime after His birth. So, while not officially part of the Christmas story, the Magi remain important in the life of Jesus and to us. Their coming to Jesus was significant because they were not Jews, yet knew Him as their Savior.

These gentiles signify that Christ's redemption was for the whole world and not just for the Jewish people.

The arrival of the Magi was a Holy Epiphany and it has been called that for centuries. The all-encompassing nature of the Gospel was first proclaimed by the angelic multitude (Luke 2:13-14) and these important humans affirmed it. The whole exciting story can be found in Matthew 2:1-12.

If you look closely at the passage of Matthew 2, you will notice that the Bible never says how many wise men came to Jesus but it does mention that they brought three gifts. Matthew 2:11 tells us what these gifts were and we notice that these are strange gifts for a little boy but truly prophetic gifts for the Savior of the world. Look at the chart:

GIFT	SIGNIFICANCE	NOTES
gold	King	This is a gift given to royalty at the time of Christ's birth. Jesus was the King of Kings.
frankincense	Prophet	Incense was used by priests at the time of Christ. Smoke was always a sign of prayer and the prophetic ministry. Jesus was called "Prophet" many times during His life - and surely He is!
myrrh	Priest	The embalming ointment myrrh was used for burial. Jesus was born to suffer and die as a priestly sacrifice for our sins.

Matthew inextricably shows us, in these gifts, the path to salvation in Christ. It is the Cross. May our Lord bless you in your devotion during this Epiphany season as you contemplate this wonderful mystery found in Emmanuel - God With Us.



FROM THE BOARD FOR MISSIONS

Cindy Terrell, Chair

The Food Pantry

We continue to collect food pantry items which benefit our brothers and sisters at Centro Cristiano Redwoods (Oxnard), ministry to local Mixteco friends, and others in need in our community. Drop off donations **at the welcome table** at all worship times.



Here is what we can always use:

FOOD (non-perishable):

- Bags of rice – any size
 - Bags of pinto beans - any size
 - Pasta
 - Canned tomatoes
 - Tomato sauce
 - Bags of flour
 - Maseca
 - Cooking oil
 - Sugar
 - Salt.
- Knorr seasoning (chicken or beef)
 - Fruit juices
 - Cereal
 - Oatmeal
 - Canned or dried fruit
 - Cans of tuna
 - Peanut butter
 - Coffee
 - Gift cards to help purchase chicken, milk, eggs, tortillas.



Christmas Gifts

We would like to thank all who contributed to our Christmas Gift Drive during November and December. Your generosity went a long way.

Pastor Javier reports that many families in need were overwhelmingly blessed by your generosity. Some gifts were also shared with Centro Cristiano Santa Paula. Pastor Marco also sends his thanks.

FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS

Ernie Moore, Chair

The Divine Call Process Continues

Happy New Year, St. John's Members! We send our sincerest wishes for good health and great spirits from our hearts to yours!

Many thanks to Pastor Mark and all the volunteers for their hard work and dedication to St. John's. There is much that goes on behind the scenes to continue to produce Gospel messages that remind us of where our focus needs to be... on Him! We are certainly blessed by the efforts of so many that keep our 120-year tradition of ministry alive in our community!



Our Call Committee continues in the Call Process. While initial interviews were promising, life challenges and COVID19 factors led initial pastoral candidates in other directions. Though we've run into a few roadblocks, our Call Committee remains faithful in the process. We have been working hand-in-hand with the Pacific Southwest District (PSD) throughout. It is a responsibility none of us takes lightly. Thank you for your patience as we work through these unprecedented times and the challenges it brings.

We believe in a faithful God and we look forward to His leading. We are praying for the future of Our Church, which includes the Calling of our next Pastor.

Currently, the Elders and the Call Committee are reviewing the latest list of candidates we received from the District. With the holidays shortly behind us, we will be scheduling interviews with candidates in the upcoming weeks. If all goes well, the next step would be to invite a few select candidates to visit our church and schedule opportunities for them to meet with our members. Please keep in mind this step will be impacted by the then current status of COVID19. Our hope is that we will be able to safely navigate the process and that a recommendation can be provided to the Voters soon. Please continue to pray for St. John's and for its next pastor.

New Sunday Worship Time!



Announcing: St. John's is changing worship time on Sundays to 10:30 am. It is our hope that this later starting time will give the air a few more degrees of warmth and the dew a little more time to dissipate. Worship is live streamed on the lawn and is also accessible by parking and worshipping in your car. We look forward to seeing you this Sunday at 10:30 am.

Congratulations - St. John's Music Ministry



We are thankful for the great effort of our Music Ministry this Christmas season. Through many worship times and countless hours of recording, they have proclaimed the Christmas Gospel with boldness and with excellence. If you have not seen the marvelous video "A Christmas Spectacular", we encourage you to go to our

website and check it out. You'll see and hear our full Music Ministry from Worship Band, to Handbells, Organ, solos, duets, and trios. Enjoy this treat of Christmas joy.

Christmas Worship Thanks

Innovative answers for worship setting during the COVID19 pandemic led to beautiful worship outside, including Christmas Eve at the Fire Pit. Many thanks to Pastor Mark, Elders, and Worship Teams for making this possibility a reality.



Pastor Mark and Christmas Worship Leaders as the congregation gathers together.

Christmas Church Decorating

Many thanks for all who helped decorate the church for Christmas streaming and music recording. Your part in sharing the Christmas story has been a vital part of our proclamation this year.

FROM THE BOARD FOR PARISH EDUCATION
Christie Allmen, Chair

Bible Study: Luther and His Barber - Advice on Prayer



Coming your way, this month, is a **three-week** Bible study on prayer, based on Martin Luther's advice to his barber. Don't miss this short study that could very well change your prayer life! Contact Gary Henricksen: ghenricksen@stjohnsoxnard.com or at 805.983.0330 x15 for more info or to register. The study starts on January 18.

Bible Basics Lecture Series

Also, we will be preparing a Lecture Video/Study Guide series on Bible Basics. It should be published in late Winter or early Spring. Many topics will be covered including an overview of the Old and New Testaments, biblical themes, and biblical literature types.

ST. JOHN'S COMMUNICATIONS
Sara Gonzales



New on the Website

Our Website is updated weekly. You are encouraged to check out:

- All Christmas music videos posted individually.
- The entire "A Christmas Spectacular".
- Sermons that you may have missed.
- Our famous bird puppets in performance.
- All about the organ in St. John's Church.
- More info on what we believe, teach, and confess as Lutherans.
- Much, much more.



Rate Our Website

Please help us bring our website to the top of a Google search. All you have to do is rate our website. Here's how:

1. Google search St. John's Lutheran Oxnard
2. On the far right sidebar, click on Google reviews (by the stars)
3. Write your own review - and make sure to give us 5 stars!

FROM THE GRACE PLACE PUPPET THEATER MINISTRY

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, the Lord has done great things for them. [Psalm 126:2].



This year we were able to produce the first online Christmas program, A Christmas Spectacular. It was a wonderful way to combine our music, tech, and puppet theater ministries. It was even more special to continue to have the little ones of our church family be involved in the music video. Many thanks for all that helped, shared the program and videos, and big thank you to all our children!

Exciting Easter plans are in the making. How can you help?

- Dressing puppets
- Sewing and costume design
- Designing props
- Actors, dancers, Puppeteers

This is a great fun ministry to do with family and friends. We would love you to join the group. Contact Sara Gonzales for details: sarabpk20@gmail.com or at 805-479-2279.



New Puppets

We recently were blessed by Ventura Vineyard Christian Church donating 5 huge bins of puppets, props, and scripts. Some of the puppets were in the recent Christmas video, Boompa's Christmas Carol. We are so thankful for this gift and the many blessings we receive with our

puppet ministry. All videos are on our website under the ministry tab, puppet ministry.

DETAILS, DETAILS!

Offering Envelopes

Your 2021 offering envelopes are available **at the welcome table**. If you don't see your family set of envelopes or would like a set made, please see someone at the welcome table or contact the office at (805) 983-0330, ext. **10**. Also, please note that the numbers **may** have been revised for the next year. Anyone who uses online banking should update their records.

Eagle Walk Bricks

New things to celebrate and commemorate? Events to remember? Become part of our Eagle Walk. Celebrate your child or acknowledge and remember loved ones and/or significant dates in your life, including: weddings, birthdays, parents or grandparents. Contact the office for an order form.

Thrivent Choice \$\$\$

If you are a Thrivent Member, you can direct choice dollars to help St. John's. To be eligible to direct Choice Dollars as part of Thrivent Choice®, you must be a client with benefit membership. Individual eligibility is also based on at least one of the following:

- \$750 or more in annual billed premiums of qualifying life / health insurance products.
- \$20,000 or more in contract value of qualifying life insurance / annuity products.

Call 800-847-4836 and when prompted, say "**Thrivent Choice®**." Press 1 to **direct Choice Dollars** or 2 to hear **Thrivent Choice** program Terms and Conditions. (If prompted, say or enter your phone number and date of birth.) A representative will work with you to **direct Choice Dollars**.

FROM THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD



From Concordia Seminary St. Louis

The Concordia Seminary Lay Bible Institute is held three times a year. You are invited to join an online symposium intitled: Galatians: Hearing Paul's Gospel.

Saturday, February 6, 2021

10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Registration: \$20

Registration deadline: Jan. 24, 2021



Presenter:

Dr. Mark Seifrid

Paul's message to the Galatians is familiar to us. Or at least we suppose so! In his letter to these churches, the apostle speaks not only to the first century but also to the 21st century. He speaks to the questions of our time with amazing vitality. He speaks to the exclusion of outsiders and thus to racial issues. He addresses the question that Bonhoeffer raised in the isolation and loneliness of his prison cell: "Who am I?" Paul gives us a clear answer in Galatians. It is a letter that deserves to be heard afresh.

Register online at [Concordia Seminary St. Louis / Resources / Lay Bible Institute](#)

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday, January 5	Fire Pit Passages and Prayer – 7:30 pm
Tuesday, January 5 - 17	Registration for Bible study: Luther on Prayer
Tuesday, January 12, 19, 26	Fire Pit Passages and Prayer - 7:30 pm
Sunday, January 24	Last day for “Hearing Paul’s Gospel” registration
Saturday, February 6	Hearing Paul’s Gospel Lecture (see Concordia above)
Wednesday, February 17	Ash Wednesday

ON THE SIDELINES



A Little Lutheran Laughter: The Three Wise Men

The three wise men came to the manger with gifts for baby Jesus. They brought gold and frankincense... Oh wait, there’s myrrh!

Recipe of the Month: The Crabby Christmas Appetizer

- 1 can crab
- 3 tablespoons horseradish
- 1 cup ketchup
- 2 package cream cheese

1. Stir horseradish in ketchup to make a cocktail sauce.
2. Spread cream cheese evenly on a plate.
3. Drain crab and put meat on cream cheese.
4. Spread cocktail sauce over the crab.

HOW TO CONTACT US



St. John's Lutheran Church, 1500 North C St. Oxnard, CA 93030
805.983.0330; stjohnsoxnard.com

STAFF

Vivian Moore, Office Manager: extension 10; vmoore@stjohnsoxnard.com
Gary Henricksen, Parish Administrator: extension 15; ghenricksen@stjohnsoxnard.com

OFFICERS, BOARD CHAIRS, AND MINISTRIES STAFF

David Chavez - President

William Speitel - Vice-President

Joyce Gregory - Treasurer

Marilyn Valenzuela - Secretary

Ernie Moore - Elders

Art Terrell - Trustees

Christie Allmen - Parish Education

Cindy Terrell - Missions

Emma Thompson – Sunday School

Scott Meier – Worship Coordinator

Sara Gonzales – Digital Media/Puppets

THE FINAL WORD



**“And His mother treasured up all these things in her heart.”
Luke 2:51b**